



RAINY RIVER DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Information Technology Nestor Falls School

In March of 2012 the Board was approached by a company called WireE to gain access rights to the Thunder Bay Telephone tower on the Robert Moore School site. Due to the Ministry of Education's reduction in the Grants for Student Needs for technology coupled with Nestor Falls School's size, the issue of providing a workable number of computers and other IT equipment has arisen. WireE has several corporate social responsibility initiatives. As a result, WireE was quick to respond and eager to assist in outfitting the students at Nestor Falls School with the latest in technology to enhance their education.

Through funding from WireE, six iPad 3s, 10 Lenovo Thinkpad Edge E530 laptops and two HP Laserjet pro 400 wireless printers were acquired. This would give the students in Grades 4 to 8 a laptop each and the Primary students would share a laptop and six iPads.

With the technology influx of devices at Nestor Falls, their small size and unique connectivity, the IT Department took the initiative to move them a few steps ahead. Personalization of the students' individual laptops was opened up to encourage the feeling of ownership and wireless printing from any device is being tested out. Cloud computing is the biggest move forward with each Junior and Intermediate student being allocated Skydrive online storage space for their files and Office 365. Skydrive also allows sharing of files and is accessible on any device from anywhere there is an Internet connection. OneNote, email and calendaring are used for organization of notes, communications and events. Microsoft applications such as Word, Excel and PowerPoint are also available via the Cloud allowing students to electronically study and complete assignments from home.

The addition of technology at Nestor Falls School represents a number of benefits for both students and staff. A one to one 'device to student' ratio at the Junior and Intermediate levels means that students are able to use their time more efficiently no matter which application they are using as there is no longer a wait time to use a device. This in turn increases the likelihood of using digital applications. This is especially advantageous in a classroom where two divisions are being taught at the same time as using digital applications allows students to work simultaneously at their own developmental level. For example, while a student reading at a Level 24 text is engaged in one of hundreds of texts available on-line at a site like Razkids, a classmate is reading a Level 60 text from an equally large selection. In fact, the entire class is reading at their own developmental level. This is just one example of the type of differentiated instruction that is made practical because of the availability of individual devices. At the Primary level the availability of iPads opens the doors to dozens of educational applications and learning opportunities that would otherwise be difficult to access. Students at Nestor Falls School will now be at the forefront of digital literacy as they begin to utilize a variety of digital media and applications.

On December 5th Rob Barlow, CEO of WireE, flew into Nestor Falls to present the new equipment to the students. Mr. Barlow was presented a plaque thanking WireE for their generation contribution to the school.